APPENDIX

[*Vide* Answer to Starred Question No 1595 asked by Sri T. S. Ramaswami at the meeing of the Legislative Assembly held on 18th September 1961, page 21 supra.]

On two occasions, after the reorganisation of the States, Forest Guards in Kanyakumari district had resorted to opening of fire while performing their official duties.

2. In the first case, a Forest Guard named Rajarathnam, while on duty in the Asambu Forest Reserve on 18th May 1958, opened fire when a group of smugglers attacked some forest officials. A certain Esakkimuthu Pillai sustained a gun-shot injury, to which he succumbed later.

3. In the second case, a Forester named Sri Kanagarajan of the Azhagiyapandipuram Forest Reserve and his men went to Asambu Forest Reserve for patrolling it. They saw three persons (who had also gone there to collect fuel) running away on seeing them. Forest watcher Marappa Thevar opened fire. One Thambiran Pillai was injured.

4. On each of the occasions, an enquiry was conducted by the Revenue Divisional Officer (E.F.C.M.), Padmanabhapuram.

5. In the first case, the Revenue Divisional Officer held that the Forest Guard was justified in having opened fire in self-defence. The Collector of Kanyakumari did not agree with the Revenue Divisional Officer. After investigation by the Police, the forest official concerned was prosecuted on a charge of murder. He was acquitted by the Court.

6. In the second case, the Revenue Divisional Officer held that forest watcher was not justified in having opened fire. Both the Forest Guard and the Forest Watcher were charged before the appropriate Court. They were acquitted by the Court.

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